



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/725,800	12/02/2003	Carolyn L. Slone	US20020354	3345
173 7590 02/08/2007 WHIRLPOOL PATENTS COMPANY - MD 0750 500 RENAISSANCE DRIVE - SUITE 102 ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085			EXAMINER SNIDER, THERESA T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1744	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS		02/08/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/725,800

Applicant(s)

SLONE, CAROLYN L

Examiner

Theresa T. Snider

Art Unit

1744

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 18-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

2. Claims 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Lee et al..

Lee et al. discloses a length of flexible vacuum hose (fig. 5, #52, fig. 9, #72).

Lee et al. discloses a storage space for the hose within a reach zone of one of a driver and an occupant of a vehicle (fig. 9, #56, col. 6, lines 2-4).

Lee et al. discloses a means preventing the hose from being withdrawn from the space when the vehicle is in drive mode (fig. 9, #58).

With respect to claim 25, Lee et al. discloses the length of hose sufficiently long to reach around the reach zone (fig. 9, #72)

With respect to claim 26, Lee et al. discloses controls within the reach zone to activate and deactivate the vacuum cleaning system (col. 5, lines 45-47, fig. 9, #34).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

4. Claims 18-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Sepke and Iaciofano et al..

Lee et al. discloses a similar system however fails to disclose a reel.

Art Unit: 1744

Lee et al. discloses a length of vacuum hose (fig. 5, #52, fig. 9, #72).

Sepke discloses a reel for storage of a length of vacuum hose (fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the reel of Sepke in Lee et al. to allow for storage of the length of hose of Lee et al. in a minimum of space.

Lee et al. discloses a storage space in a vehicle for the hose (fig. 5, #50, fig. 9, #56).

With respect to claims 18-20, Iaciovano et al. discloses a reel for a hose having an automatic means for preventing the hose from being removed from the reel (abstract). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the automatic means of Iaciovano et al. in Lee et al. in view of Sepke to prevent the hose from becoming unwound while in the storage space.

With respect to claim 21, Iaciovano et al. discloses a means for disabling the automatic means (col. 3, lines 19-20).

With respect to claim 22, Lee et al. discloses the length of hose sufficiently long to reach around the reach zone (fig. 5, #52)

With respect to claim 23, Lee et al. discloses controls within the reach zone to activate and deactivate the vacuum cleaning system (col. 5, lines 45-47).

5. Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al..

Lee et al. discloses a similar vacuum cleaning system however fails to disclose a locking means.

Lee et al. discloses a length of flexible vacuum hose fixed to the vehicle at one end (fig. 5, #52,22).

Art Unit: 1744

Lee et al. discloses a storage space in the vehicle, within the reach of a driver or occupant, for the hose (fig. 9, #56, col. 6, lines 2-4).

Lee et al. discloses a means for preventing the hose from being withdrawn from the space (fig. 9, #58). Lee et al. discloses storage of the hose in a trunk, which is known to one of ordinary skill in the art to have a lock thereon. Also, it is to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide locking means to storage spaces that are accessible to a driver or occupant, for instance the glove compartment.

Lee et al. discloses a controls means for disabling the locking means being located in a reach zone of the driver (trunk release latch that is known to be present in vehicles). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a lock and control means for the lid of the box of Lee et al. to prevent children from gaining access to the contents.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 11/27/2006 with respect to claims 18-27 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant urges Lee does not provide for a storage space within a reach zone of either the driver or an occupant of the vehicle, along with a means for preventing the hose from being withdrawn from the storage space when the vehicle is in the drive mode. Applicant is believed to be in error with this argument because Lee discloses a storage space within a reach zone of either the driver or an occupant of the vehicle (fig. 9, #56, col. 6, lines 2-4). Lee discloses a lid on the space that would prevent the hose from being withdrawn from the space when the vehicle is in drive mode (fig. 9, #58).

Art Unit: 1744

Applicant urges the combination of Lees fails to disclose the operability of the vacuum system during a drive mode of the vehicle and Lee in view of Sepke and Iaciovano fails to disclose means for automatically disabling the unit when the vehicle is in the drive mode. It is noted that the 'automatic disabling means' of claim 18 is for preventing the hose from being removed from the storage space NOT for automatically disabling the vacuum system.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 1-17 are allowed.

Conclusion

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

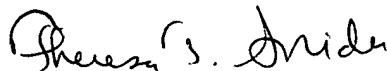
Art Unit: 1744

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Theresa T. Snider whose telephone number is (571) 272-1277.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (5:30am-2:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gladys Corcoran can be reached on (571) 272-1214. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



THERESA T. SNIDER
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Theresa T. Snider
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1744

2/5/07